

First Peter 3:7
Biblical Principles of Godward Marriage part 4

Purpose: to encourage all men to pursue a Godward relationship with their wife

Introduction: Just as the primary issue for a Christian wife is having a Godward attitude, so too for a Christian husband. Godward habits of thinking (attitude) are crucial to living a life as a husband that is pleasing to the Father.

- 1) Speaking specifically to the men—3:7 ⁷ *The husbands* [ἀνὴρ] (**masculine** ones),
 - a) Adverb—*in the same way* [ὁμοίως],
 - i) With the same Godward attitude detailed so far throughout chapter 2-3
 - b) Refers to Christian husbands (see “fellow-heirs”)
- 2) Command # 1—Live considerately—are to be living together [pres. act. ptc. as impv. συνουκείω]
 - a) Negatively: what a Godward husband is not:
 - i) Being harsh or domineering (never swear at or use harsh words with your wife)
 - ii) Viewing the wife as of lesser importance or somehow inferior (never mock your wife or make fun of her)
 - iii) Optional for Christian husbands (be the man God wants you to be)
 - b) Positively: what a Godward husband is
 - i) Involves sharing your life, not just a bed or an address. See Genesis 20:3 in LXX to refer to Sarah’s marriage relationship with Abraham.
 - (1) There are only 2 instances in the OT where this word refers to sexual relations (Deuteronomy 22:13; 25:5 LXX)
 - (2) Don’t avoid your wife by hiding at work, in the great outdoors, or in your garage or basement.
 - ii) This is not only an action, but an attitude
 - c) Be considerate of your wife *according to knowledge* [κατὰ γνῶσις]
 - i) Knowledge about God
 - (1) Of His attributes, His relationship within the Tri-unity, His works, His revealed will in His Word, etc.
 - ii) Knowledge about your wife
 - (1) In conformity with Christian knowledge about God’s revelation for husband-wife relations in general and sexual relations in particular.
 - (a) Be understanding and considerate in light of this knowledge.
 - (2) Learn her frustrations, her goals, her desires, her strengths and weaknesses, her temptations and struggles, etc. This involves her entire person: spiritually, emotionally, physically, mentally, etc.
 - iii) Knowledge about yourself
 - (1) Your role, dependence on God, provisions from God, struggles, etc.
 - d) Live with whom? *with the wife* [γυναικεῖος] (the **feminine** one)

- i) Not simply as a wife, but as a feminine version of God's image-bearer. She has a unique value and contribution as a female that you as a husband will never have. Recognize that uniqueness.
- e) Consideration due the one who is comparatively weaker—as [ὥς] *to the weaker/delicate vessel* [ἀσθενής σκεῦος]
 - i) Negatively—What this comparative weakness is **not**:
 - (1) Being weaker intellectually, emotionally, morally, or spiritually
 - (2) She is not the recycling bin or a garbage can, nor is she a plastic drinking glass.
 - ii) Positively—What this comparative weakness **is**:
 - (1) She is to be considered a vulnerable, expensive vase that you must protect at all costs.
 - (2) She may indeed be weaker physically, but you must recognize her true value (as the next command says).
 - iii) This is one reason why abuse of any kind (emotional, financial, verbal, or physical) is sinful.
 - (1) This is one reason why you teach your boys to be gentle with words and actions toward their sisters and mother. They need to learn the habits of thinking and behavior.
 - iv) Demonstrate courtesy and chivalry, good manners and politeness.
 - v) Provide her with what is needed to assist her in all facets of her life.
- 3) Command # 2—Live respectfully—recognizing (granting what is appropriate) [pres. act. ptc. as impv. ἀπονέμω] *her honor/value/worth/dignity* [τιμῇ]
 - a) Honor is due the one who is fundamentally your spiritual equal—as [ὥς] *also* [καί] *fellow heirs* [συγκληρονόμος] *of the grace of life* [χάρις ζωῆ],
 - i) The grace-gift that consists of spiritual life and eternal life, which all genuine Christians possess equally. You have the same eternal destiny.
 - ii) Remember the inheritance in 1:4.
 - b) Why should the husband show her honor? *for* [εἰς] *your^{pl}* (the husband's) *prayers* [προσευχῇ] *not* [μή] *to be cut off/hindered* [pres. pass. infin. ἐγκόπτω].
 - i) There are serious consequences for taking advantage of your wife's vulnerability.
 - ii) The husband who doesn't follow these principles rarely prays as he ought
 - iii) The husband who does pray, but says, "Why does it seem like God does not answer my prayers?" should look at this passage for the answer.
 - iv) Prayer by the husband is assumed to be normal and consistent. See 1st Timothy 2:8 for men praying in the congregational meetings.
- 4) Summary and applications
 - a) Your wife's greatest need is not a **wealthy** husband or **talented** husband or a **hard-working** husband. She needs a **holy** husband.

- b) Consider a prayer like this: “Father, help me to think of my wife before I think of myself, to consider her needs above my own, and to love and serve her in such a way that I don’t expect anything in return.”

Take-home truth: only God’s grace can enable you to be a Godward husband